

the needs of County residents and with the protection of open space lands for resource preservation and outdoor recreation purposes.

Among the various planning standards, the standard deliberated upon at greatest length by the Advisory Committee was the land use planning standard pertaining to the identification and delineation of 'prime' agricultural lands. Under the currently adopted regional land use plan and the Waukesha County agricultural land preservation plan, prime agricultural areas were defined as areas consisting of farm units which meet the following criteria: 1) the farm units must be at least 35 acres in size, 2) at least 50 percent of the farm units must be covered by soils meeting U. S. Natural Resources Conservation Service criteria for National prime farmland or farmland of Statewide importance, and 3) the farm units must be located in a contiguous block of similar farmland at least 100 acres in size.

After careful consideration, taking into account changes in farming practices and the types of farms in the County, as well as the extent of urban development in the County since the 1970s, the Advisory Committee recommended changes to the criteria on soil productivity and block size to be used in identifying prime agricultural areas. Specifically, the Committee recommended that prime agricultural areas be identified as consisting of farm units which are at least 35 acres in size; at least 50 percent of which are covered by National prime farmland; and which are located in a contiguous block of similar farmland of at least five square miles in size. The removal of soils of Statewide importance from consideration in identifying prime agricultural areas, together with the increase in the farming block size criterion from 100 acres to five square miles, had the effect of substantially reducing the amount of land identified as prime agricultural land under the County development plan as compared to the amount under the regional land use plan and the County agricultural land preservation plan. .

## RECOMMENDED COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The development plan for Waukesha County presented in this report consists of four elements, each pertaining to a key aspect of the physical development of the County: land use, housing, transportation, and parks and open space. The land use element is the most basic of the four plan elements, inasmuch as it establishes the basic settlement pattern, expressed in terms of land use, population, household, and employment levels, recommended for the County. The other three plan elements were, in turn, developed within the framework of the recommended land use plan. The land use,

housing, transportation, and park and open space plan elements comprise the core of a development plan for the County. This core may be supplemented over time through the preparation of additional plan elements for other functional areas, in response to changing needs within the County.

## LAND USE PLAN

A preliminary land use plan was completed for public review and comment late in 1995. That plan was prepared so as to be consistent with the County development objectives and standards recommended by the Advisory Committee, incorporating to the extent practicable the provisions of all adopted city, village, and town land use plans. Where local land use plan recommendations were found to be inconsistent with the County development objectives, the County land use plan was designed to meet, to the extent practicable, those objectives. In areas where no adopted local land use plan existed, a recommended land use pattern was developed in accordance with the County development objectives. Within the extraterritorial planning areas of cities and villages, where conflicts were found to exist between adopted city or village plans and adopted town plans, the County land use plan was designed to accommodate whichever local plan was found to be most consistent with the County development objectives. Where both an extraterritorial plan and a town plan were found to be inconsistent with the County development objectives, neither plan was incorporated into the County land use plan; a land use plan for the affected area was developed in accordance with the County development objectives.

During the four-month period from mid-November 1995 through mid-March 1996, the preliminary plan was presented for public review and comment in a series of seven intergovernmental meetings held throughout the County and 20 additional meetings with local officials and interested citizens. Utilizing information provided at these meetings, including information pertaining to recent urban development and recent local approvals of subdivision plats and certified survey maps not reflected on the preliminary plan, a final recommended plan was prepared. Similar to the preliminary plan, the final recommended plan was prepared to meet the Advisory Committee-approved County development objectives.

It should be noted that the planning process recommended by the Advisory Committee represents a departure from conventional land use planning practices, under which the amount of land allocated to various land use categories is determined largely by forecast increases in population, household, and employment levels over a